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**From:** Grantham, Nancy  
**Sent:** Sat 8/29/2015 11:44:46 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Silverton, San Juan officials seek to clarify Superfund position

**From:** Carey, Curtis  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 29, 2015 7:32 PM  
**To:** Grantham, Nancy; Gray, David; Durant, Jennah; Smith, Paula; Germann, Sandy  
**Subject:** Silverton, San Juan officials seek to clarify Superfund position

<http://www.durangoherald.com/article/20150826/NEWS01/150829699/Silverton-San-Juan-officials-seek-to-clarify-Superfund-position->

Article published Aug 26, 2015

## **Silverton, San Juan officials seek to clarify Superfund position**

Federal listing should be on the table for Gold King Mine

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**By Peter Marcus Herald staff writer**

DENVER – Silverton and San Juan County officials Wednesday sought to clarify their position on Superfund status in the wake of the Gold King Mine spill, suggesting that they remain open to all options.

In a letter from Silverton Mayor Christine Tookey and San Juan County Commissioner Ernie Kuhlman, the officials state that while Superfund status should be on the table, they have not “foreclosed any options.” The federal listing offers additional resources to clean up blighted areas that could be toxic to humans.

Silverton and San Juan County have been fighting accusations that the town and county are partially responsible for the Gold King Mine disaster because they

resisted Superfund status. Some in the community feared that a federal listing would be a black eye and endanger tourism.

Efforts at reclamation for Gold King Mine would have been bolstered by an influx of federal resources. Without the Superfund status, only a small EPA-contracted team was working on the reclamation. An error by the team Aug. 5 caused an estimated 3 million gallons of mining wastewater from the Gold King Mine to pour into the Animas River, turning it a mustard-yellow color.

A recent joint resolution from the town and county stated that they would work to petition Congress for federal disaster dollars.

“We are not interested in playing the blame game,” the letter states. “The past is the past, and we all need to move forward to address the issues facing all of the communities in the Animas River Basin. This is a complex issue, and we all need to work together to solve the issues.

“To be clear, this community owns this problem and is committed to working with everyone,” the letter continues. “We have suggested applying for federal disaster relief as a way to get more resources on the ground immediately to address the impacts of the Gold King Mine spill.”

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